Date : 09/02/98
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JFK ASSASSINATION SYSTEM
IDENTIFICATION FORM

AGENCY INFORMATION

AGENCY : INSCOM/CSF
RECORD NUMBER : 194-10014-10116
RECORDS SERIES : DOD AFFILIATED PERSONNEL AND INCIDENT INVESTIGATIONS
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : AA851401WJ - PAGES 20-21

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

ORIGINATOR : USA
FROM :
TO :
TITLE : INFORMATION REPORT
DATE : 00/00/00
PAGES : 2
SUBJECTS : CHARLES, CLEMARD J

UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
CLASSIFICATION : CONFIDENTIAL
RESTRICTIONS : REFERRED
CURRENT STATUS : POSTPONED IN FULL
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 06/15/98
OPENING CRITERIA : COMPLETION OF REVIEW BY CIA FOR RELEASABILITY
COMMENTS : DOCUMENTS DECLARED "NOT BELIEVED RELEVANT" BY THE CIA AND AGREED TO BY THE ARRB, PER MEMO DTD 14 AUG 98.

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY Haiti

REPORT NO. OO-[redacted]/14068-68 A(5)322

SUBJECT Clemard Joseph-Charles Must Raise US $605 Thousand Before He Can Resume His Banking And Other Activities/Outline Of Charles's Plans/President Duvalier Reportedly Hopes To Improve His Image And To Attract Foreign Capital And Business Activity/ Rumors Continue Concerning Possible Reorganization Of Haitian Government

DATE DISTR.

NO. PAGES 2

REFERENCES DCS Case [redacted] 47,540 Supplement to: OO-B-321/12106-68

DATE OF INFO. May 68

PLACE & DATE ACQ Port-au-Prince, Haiti, May 68

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE Naturalized US citizen of Haitian birth. Source maintains close contacts with Haitians in the US and with prominent business and political figures in Haiti and travels at irregular intervals to the Caribbean countries.

1. Clemard Joseph-Charles was released from prison during the evening of 25 Apr 68 in return for a "ransom" of US $605 thousand.

2. Charles has been given until 24 May 68 to produce the US $605 thousand. This sum must be in an irrevocable letter of credit on an American bank in favor of the National Bank of the Republic of Haiti. It has been intimated that the 24 May 68 deadline can be extended, should Charles be experiencing any really unusual difficulties in producing the required money.

3. In order to obtain his release from prison, Charles had to sign a memorandum of understanding that he would produce the US $605 thousand plus some unidentified real property. These terms were agreed to by both Charles and his wife prior to the release. At the same time, Charles wrote a personal letter to President Duvalier asking for release and promising to hand over the money and property in question.

4. Charles is now under house arrest in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

5. Charles's immediate resources consist of about US $100 thousand in cash in two US banks (no additional data available), various homes, businesses (essential oils, an automobile dealership and others (no additional data available)), buildings, land and about US $400 thousand worth of Haitian government bonds. He did have another US $300 thousand in personal funds in Haiti. He can no longer count on this money to help raise the US $605 thousand, however, because prior to his release from prison the Haitian authorities (no additional data available) confiscated it.

6. Charles has agreed to raise the US $605 thousand on condition that it be used to pay off legitimate claims of depositors in his Banque Commerciale d'Haiti. He has stated that he will permit the money to be paid out only to those depositors who are able to produce documentary proof that they had deposited funds in his bank.

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7. Charles and several associates now propose to reorganize the Banque Commerciale d'Haiti, formerly his private preserve, into a corporate entity and to incorporate it in the US. The associates plan to raise US $500 thousand for this new corporation. This sum will be separate from the US $505 thousand and will serve to put the new banking corporation into business. Secretarial help and at least some of the six directors of the corporation will be US citizens. Two of the directors will be Charles himself and Louis [illegible].

8. President Duvalier is reportedly most interested in the new venture and is anxious to see it succeed. He has finally realized that the economic situation in Haiti has deteriorated so badly during the past 18 months that he must do something before total bankruptcy occurs. Accordingly, President Duvalier wants to improve his "image" in the eyes of the outside world, particularly in the US, and by doing so hopes to attract investments and business activities from outside Haiti. He apparently hopes that the new, incorporated, Banque Commerciale d'Haiti, will help attract such activity to Haiti and is therefore permitting Charles to proceed.

9. [Collector's Note: 00-B-321/12106-68 described a possible reorganization in the Haitian government. This reorganization, sponsored by Duvalier, would place Duvalier on the elevated plane of spiritual advisor and father of the people and would, on the surface, at least, turn over to a president the day-to-day management of Haitian government affairs. Various names have been mentioned for the position of president under the possible new system.] The name of Luc-Albert Foucard has recently been mentioned frequently in Haiti as the possible new president under the rumored reorganization of the government. Foucard is a son-in-law of Duvalier and lives in Haiti. He is in charge of tourism. Some say that Duvalier listens to Foucard and is, to a degree, influenced by him. I doubt this very strongly.

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